See Crippled Vets Walk Again

Doctor Said They Could, So Soldiers Are Given New Lease on Life.

ATLANTIC CITY—They laughed when he got up to walk. So he went to the deserted basement of the army's Thomas M. England General hospital at night and walked around on legs that were labeled "useless," says the Associated Press.

With him went other wounded veterans—boys hit in the spine by bullets or shrapnel. They had been doomed to spend the rest of their lives on their backs until a young doctor from Inland Park, N. J., Capt. William Klein Jr., 30, talked them into believing they could walk again.

These men are paraplegic patients more formally known as victims of transverse myelitis. Their spinal cords wholly or partially severed, they are without muscular control from the waist down.

Capt. Klein's technique such a paraplegic as a result of the auto accident in Germany, but the Fort Dix commander in the 3rd army has last battle when pneumonia put him.

The army's public relations office has released the dramatic story of the medical paraplegic ward, and of Captain Klein, ward officer for the paraplegic section.

All Now Walking.

A year ago, not a single paraplegic could get on his feet, and only two could use a wheel chair. Today all of the 93 men—comprising the largest paraplegic ward in the country—are walking.

They are driving automobiles.

They are shaving themselves up and down this resort city.

A year ago these were the forgotten men, Captain Klein said.

Their morale was so low it didn't rise at all—a fortunately rare occurrence. They knew that of the paraplegics of the last war, only 1 per cent ever got over today.

"Our goal for the 1,400 army paraplegics of World War II is at least 90 per cent ambulation," they make it.

Many, he said, already have been discharged, and are self-supporting civilians.

Mortalities Among Paraplegic.

"I told these men what they were up against," he said. "I told them it was up to them to do something about it, and that they could if they would only try.

"It was tough at first, but one by one they came around, and one by one they tried to walk. Now look at them."

"Walking, for a paraplegic is a difficult and arduous process. Without muscular control in the hips and legs, the actual work is done by the muscles of the chest and arms now marvelously developed in most of them.

Laughed at First.

"When we first tried to teach these men to walk, other doctors and patients called it a joke, and went at night to the basement where we practiced during the day.

"There is simply no way to tell the men how much exercise such a paraplegic as a result of the auto accident in Germany, but the force of command in the 3rd army has last battle when pneumonia put him.

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